

MEMORANDUM FOR; The 303 Committee

SUBJECT : United States Government Support of
Covert Action Directed at the Soviet
Union

1. SUMMARY

In accordance with NSC 5502/1, as revalidated on 10 November 1960, CIA sponsors a covert action program which supports media* and contact activities aimed at

*The activities directed at the Soviet Union by Radio Liberty Committee and Free Europe, Inc., were approved by higher authority on 22 February 1969 and are, therefore, not treated in this paper. The Radio Liberty Committee, successor organization to the American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism, is composed of three major divisions: Radio Liberty which broadcasts via short wave to the Soviet Union 24 hours a day in 18 languages; a book publication and distribution program designed to provide Soviet citizens with books not normally accessible to the Soviet public; and the Institute for the Study of the USSR which produces research papers and publications targeted at the developing countries in Africa, the Middle East and the Far East. The Committees for a Free Estonia, a Free Latvia and a Free Lithuania and the Estonian National Council receive from Free Europe, Inc. small subsidies which serve essentially to provide stipends for selected elder statesmen of the Baltic emigration.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
VAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

stimulating and sustaining pressures for liberalization and evolutionary change from within the Soviet Union.

These are:

A. Narodno Trudovoy-Soyuz (NTS) (People's Labor Alliance), a Russian emigre organization which engages in the procurement, publication and distribution of Soviet dissident literature and socio-political commentary.

B. Zakordonne Predstavnytstvo Ukrainskoyi Holovnoyi Vyzvolnoyi Rady (ZP/UHVR) (The Foreign Representation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council) fosters nationalistic and cultural dissidence in the Soviet Ukraine.

C. [] a Russian-language newspaper [] which stimulates and supports dissidence among Soviet intellectuals.

D. A Russian-language book and pamphlet program, which publishes and distributes to the Soviet intelligentsia proscribed Russian literature and commentary by Soviet writers.

This paper recommends that the 303 Committee approve the continuation of the covert action program directed primarily at the Soviet intelligentsia and reaffirm the

approval it has given in the past to the program generally and the individual projects specifically.

The total cost of this program is \$ 2.3 million. The program as a whole was discussed with and endorsed by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Swank and Soviet Union Country Director Dubs on 21 October and 6 November 1969. The individual projects had been approved by the 303 Committee in 1967 and 1968.

2. PROPOSAL

While these projects differ in their approach to the Soviet target, they share common objectives which provide the justification for continued support of their activities. The primary objective is to stimulate and sustain pressures for liberalization and change from within the Soviet Union. The neuralgic points of this disaffection -- desire for personal and intellectual freedom, desire for improvement in the quality of life, and the persistence of nationalism in Eastern Europe and among the nationality groups in the Soviet Union -- are the main issues exploited by these projects. A secondary objective is to enlighten important third-country elites, especially political leaders and the public-opinion shaping professions, about the repressive nature of the Soviet system and its imperialistic and self-aggrandizing foreign policy.

Anticipating the persistence of these trends in the intellectual climate of the Soviet Union in the 1970's, there is long-range merit in continuing to encourage and support the publication and distribution of dissident literature and socio-political commentary on the broad current issues and the conditions of life in the Soviet Union, even though the regime will continue to repress dissidence. Operations aimed at influencing third-country elites are based on the assumption that U.S. - Soviet competition for prestige and influence in strategic areas will continue for an indefinite period of time. It would, therefore, seem prudent to maintain a capability of influencing third-country intellectuals and elite groups through the words and voices of distinguished Soviet nationals who are disaffected.

The intellectual dissidence movement has demonstrated a vitality of its own. It is reasonable to assume that these dissidents will continue to seek outlets for literature and socio-political commentary that has thus far been suppressed. Each time the regime has silenced a group of dissidents a new group has emerged to produce a new generation of protest literature.

An American professor of Slavic languages and literature who spent five months in the Soviet Union early this year reported that the dissidence is widespread

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among the Soviet intelligentsia and they "yearn for exposure to Western literature and cultural influence." Graphic evidence of the existence of this dissidence was provided in October 1969 by Dr. Pyotr L. Kapitsa, the "dean" of Soviet physicists, when he publicly endorsed in Washington the thesis of Dr. Andre D. Sakharov, a distinguished Soviet physicist credited with a major role in the development of the hydrogen bomb, that the United States and the Soviet Union can avoid a clash only through the convergence of their systems of government. The Sakharov thesis is set forth in a lengthy essay which has been circulating underground in the Soviet Union and which has been a staple of the CIA distribution program. Recent press dispatches from Moscow and NTS reporting indicate that the convergence ideas expounded by Dr. Sakharov are being widely circulated among the intelligentsia, including military personnel, in the form of underground mimeograph publications.

3. EFFECTIVENESS

A. NTS -- In the last year, the NTS generated publicity and open public support in the West for Soviet intellectuals and minority groups, such as the Tartars, who are persecuted by Soviet authorities. This publicity

made good use of the publication of an increasing number of Soviet protest documents procured mainly by non-Soviet NTS couriers dispatched to the Soviet Union with specific collection assignments. More than 100 items of literary and political significance were exfiltrated from the Soviet Union by the NTS in the last year. The NTS annually prints approximately 30,000 copies of Russian language books through its own publishing house and clandestinely distributes about 2,000 books a year to Soviet or Satellite nationals, primarily person-to-person. The outstanding publications in 1969 have been a pocket version of Solzhenitsyn's "Cancer Ward" and special brochures containing the Sakharov essay and related documents in various languages. (See Annex A)

B. The Ukrainian Project - The ZP/UHVR has become a channel to influential Soviet Ukrainians. In passing documents and information to emigre travelers, Soviet Ukrainian dissidents are asking that their material not be given to anyone other than the ZP/UHVR, on the grounds that it is the most discreet and efficient emigre organization in the handling of such material. In addition, the organization continues to obtain documents from sources in the Ukraine by various devious means and to make them public in the West in the effort to expose and inhibit Moscow's attempts to Russify the Ukraine. New contacts with Ukrainian intellectual circles in Eastern Europe

have resulted in an expansion of opportunities of sending publications not only to East European Ukrainians but through them to Soviet citizens. (See Annex B)

C. [] - A new chief editor was installed in October 1968 with a view toward improving the quality and distribution of this weekly newspaper published [] and continuing the progress made in the previous two years in enhancing its image with Soviet readers. An accurate means of determining the precise number of Soviets who actually read the newspaper or of judging the impact upon them is lacking and probably can not be achieved. It is interesting to note, however, that its increase in circulation outside the Soviet Union has corresponded closely with the increased presence of Soviet travelers in the West. Moreover, the [] office [] is called or visited by at least four or five Soviet travelers each month. One non-Soviet visitor, an African student at Lumumba University in Moscow, dropped in to pick up a handful of copies of the newspaper to take back to the Soviet Union to sell at black market prices to Soviet nationals. (See Annex C)

D. Russian-Language Book and Pamphlet Program. Evidence that the project's books reach the Soviet Union, are read by Soviet intellectuals, and have considerable impact on at least some of them, has been provided by Arkady Belinkov, a Soviet writer who defected in June 1968.

He declared that books identified to him as published under this program are "regarded as a vent to a different world, documents of great ideological importance." Indirect evidence of the project's effectiveness is provided by the Soviet regime's relentless efforts to suppress dissident literature and repress the dissidents. Indeed, the very issue of censorship has become a central point in the dramatic opposition of the intellectuals to the regime ever since the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial in 1966.

(See Annex D)

4. ALTERNATIVES

A. The United States could follow a policy of encouraging more vigorous emigre activities by more forthcoming identification by United States officials with emigre objectives, the extension of subsidies for emigre activities or organizations not presently receiving assistance from the United States Government, and adoption of a policy of open support for the independence of national minority areas such as the Ukraine. Substantial intensification of emigre propaganda activities might result in stimulating dissension inside the USSR, inducing defections and improving the collection of intelligence; identification with the independence of national minority groups could strengthen ethnic nationalist resistance to Russian domination. On the other hand, a more vigorous emigration probably would

strengthen the forces of conformity and repression would retard the process of evolution in popular and leadership attitudes which the program is trying to promote.

B. It could also be argued that it would be in the national interest to divorce the United States Government entirely from the emigration and its activities. In this event the efforts of Soviet conservatives to justify repression of dissent on the basis of American "subversion" would lose some of their credibility. This argument, however, is negated by the fact that suspicions of U.S. intentions are so deeply ingrained that any change in U.S. policy toward the emigration would have minimal impact on the conservatives. Moreover, a source of support for those in the Soviet Union who are sustained by a sense of contact with the emigration would be removed and the Soviet authorities would be able more easily to foist their own version of events on the people and be under less pressure to make reforms.

5. RISKS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

All of the above projects have been subjected, at one time or another, to attacks by Soviet regime media, including allegations of CIA sponsorship. Each project has weathered the attacks without any apparent loss of effectiveness. It would be prudent to anticipate that

the attacks will continue sporadically but without any effect on the operations.

6. COORDINATION

A. CIA's covert action program set forth herein was discussed with and endorsed by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Emory C. Swank and Soviet Union Country Director Adolph Dubs on 21 October and 6 November, 1969. The individual projects had been coordinated previously within the U.S. Government as follows:

(1) The NTS project was included in the 14 February and 31 August 1961 briefings of the Special Group. Specific approval was given on 19 November 1965 and continuation was approved on 5 August 1966 and 3 September 1968. Ambassador Lodge was briefed in Bonn in 1968, at which time he concurred in the continuation of support.

(2) The Ukrainian project was included in the 21 August 1961 briefing of the Special Group. The 303 Committee approved continuation of the project, subject to annual review, on 1 December 1967, and approved continuation again on 27 December 1968. Russell Fessenden, Charge in Bonn,

and Malcolm Toon, then Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, in 1968 concurred in the recommendation for continuation.

(3) Support for [] was approved by the 303 Committee on 16 February 1968, following endorsements by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Walter Stoessel and the Charge in Paris.

(4) The Russian-language book project was approved by the 303 Committee on 22 August 1967. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Stoessel and Malcolm Toon, then Soviet Union Country Director, endorsed the project. Ambassador Beam was briefed early in 1969 before he assumed his post in Moscow.

The German Intelligence Service (BND) is aware of CIA support of the NTS and ZP/UHVR. It also makes a small contribution to the support of the NTS.

7. COSTS

The allocations for the covert action program are as follows:

A. Narodno Trudovoy-Soyuz (NTS)	[]
B. The Foreign Representation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (ZP/UHVR)	[]
C. []	[]
D. Russian-Language Book Program	[]
TOTAL	[]

These funds for the program are available in the FY 1970 CIA budget.

8. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the 303 Committee approve the continuation of CIA's covert action program directed against the Soviet Union and reaffirm the approval it has given in the past to the individual projects, as described herein. The 303 Committee is also requested to approve the funding level for these projects as set forth in paragraph 7 above.